



מכון ויצמן למדע

THE WEIZMANN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

REHOVOT · ISRAEL

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PROF. I. DOSTROVSKY

Acting President

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נשיא בפועל

January 22nd, 1973

Prof. Joshua Lederberg,
Department of Genetics,
Stanford University Medical School,
Stanford,
California, 94305,
U.S.A.

Dear Prof. Lederberg,

I am writing you this letter primarily for two reasons: I am anxious to maintain as close contact as possible with members of the Institute's Board between meetings and also it has occurred to me that you might like - every now and then - to get some sense of our problems and achievements here. Needless to say, we shall greatly welcome any suggestions you may have regarding the form or content of this letter and any recommendations you may have that will help me to make these informal reports as useful and interesting as possible.

Let me this time tell you first something about the Pelletron project, which is the first stage of the Canadian Center for Nuclear Research involving the construction of a 14-million volt accelerator. The latest PERT report which deals with the design phase shows that in most areas progress is on or ahead of schedule. In one or two areas, notably in the planning of electrical installations, we have run into some delays but, fortunately, these are not expected to affect the general time schedule.

The GOLEM B project which, as you know, involves the design and construction of a high-powered computer by the Institute, has been discussed by the Executive Council. You will recall that this project has been going on at the Institute for about eight years and that it ran into difficulties in terms of its time-table and cost estimates. After receiving advice from outside experts, the Executive Council decided to continue the project and approved the allocation for this purpose of IL. 500,000 for the remainder of the 1972/73 fiscal year and IL. 1,000,000 for the 1973/74 fiscal year, when we expect the computer to be completed. The latest progress report shows a further slide in the schedule in the critical path, though we still don't know what effect this will have on the final completion date.

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To turn to yet another subject: the academic promotions committees have started work on the April '73 promotions. We have two such committees, one that deals with promotions to professorial rank, the other deals with the promotions of senior scientists. Revisions have recently been introduced by the professorial committee to simplify the procedure and in both committees a severe "tightening" of the requirements for promotion and tenure have been enforced. In view of the large number of excellent candidates, the committees will have to make some difficult choices.

Prof. H. Eisenberg, who has been Acting Head of the Polymer Department since the murder of Aharon Katzir at Lod on May 30, has been appointed Head of the Department of Polymer Research for a three-year period, and Prof. I. Talmi has been appointed as Head of the Physics Department for an additional three-year term.

The Executive Council met on December 25, 1972 and resolved, among other things, to review the Institute's building program in order to ensure that each scheduled project is carried out strictly within the available budget. This decision presents quite a problem because conditions in Israel today make it impossible to sign a fixed price agreement with contractors. Numerous clauses are linked to the cost-of-living index, to the wage index, and to the cost-of-materials index - all of which are hard to predict for projects that will extend over a period of several years. It is quite clear that all our projects will have to be reviewed and some of those now in the planning stage revised. This being the case, we asked the various architects and engineers concerned to submit revised plans by the end of this month.

More generally speaking, following protracted negotiations, a country-wide work agreement was signed on December 20, 1972 between Israel's academicians and the Institutions of Higher Learning. This agreement - retroactive to April 1, 1972 - is binding on the Weizmann Institute and means an addition of about IL. 1,041,766 to our 1972/73 budget and of about IL. 2,067,918 to the 1973/74 budget. At the moment, there is no indication that the extra sum needed for 1972/73 will be covered by either the Jewish Agency or by the Government. We are, therefore, thrown back on our own resources again, which means that our deficit will increase.

It is a good thing, therefore, that we have already begun to step up our efforts to obtain endowment support. I enclose the first of a series of pamphlets dealing with areas of research at the Institute. It will appear at regular intervals and will serve as background material. CHALLENGES IN GEOPHYSICAL RESEARCH will be followed by Challenges in Cellular Immunology, Systems Analysis, and so forth.

Let me repeat again that I look forward very much to hearing from you soon, particularly about the kind of information you would like to get from me.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,

I. Dostrovsky

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